



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

*******MEDIA ADVISORY*******

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Mayor Barrett to Mark Second Annual Safe Sleep Sabbath
City of Milwaukee partners with local faith communities to reduce infant deaths

MILWAUKEE – On Sunday, Oct. 14, Mayor Tom Barrett and Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker will mark the second annual Safe Sleep Sabbath by visiting three area churches to raise awareness of unsafe sleeping conditions, one of the most preventable causes of infant death in Milwaukee.

“Our community is faced with a crisis: Too many babies are dying because of unsafe sleep,” said Barrett. “Working with area churches, we can reach right into the heart of the community. We are grateful to the more than 50 congregations citywide who are uniting on this day to bring a common message about safe sleep to our community.”

The day is just one part of the effort to reach Barrett’s historic goal to reduce the City of Milwaukee’s overall infant mortality rate by 10 percent and the African American infant mortality rate by 15 percent by 2017. From 2008 to 2010, there were 340 infant deaths in Milwaukee. For every 1,000 infants born during that time period, 10 infants died before their first birthday, with African American infants being 2.6 times more likely to die than Caucasian infants.

“Infant mortality is seen as a barometer for the overall health of a community, and the numbers are showing that Milwaukee is struggling,” said Baker. “While we have a long way to go, through the concerted efforts of the Health Department, community partners like United Way of Greater Milwaukee and BMO Harris Bank, as well as the faith communities, we are happy to report that we are making significant strides toward our goal.”

Preliminary 2011 data indicates that 100 infants died in Milwaukee prior to their first birthday, the second-lowest number in Milwaukee history. Data is also expected to show similar trends as previous years, attributing approximately 20 percent of infant deaths to unsafe sleep.

The Safe Sleep Sabbath is being planned cooperatively by the City of Milwaukee Health Department and Columbia St. Mary’s. The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) Northwest Jurisdiction, Common Ground Southeastern Wisconsin, and the Milwaukee Inner-city Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAHA) are also supporting the day.

For a full schedule of church appearances, please see attached schedule.

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Safe Sleep Sabbath Schedule of Appearances

Sunday, October 14, 2012

9 a.m.

Greater New Birth Church

8237 W. Silver Spring Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53218
414-264-5683

11 a.m.

Parklawn Assembly of God

3725 N. Sherman Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53216
414-442-7411

12:30 p.m.

Holy Cathedral Church of God in Christ

2677 N. 40th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53210